Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 22 May 2009

Message Text

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PAGE 01 SOFIA 01630 01 OF 02 281541Z
ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 PM-05 NSC-05 SP-02 SS-15 CIAE-00
INR-07 NSAE-00 DODE-00 SCA-01 DHA-02 PRS-01 ARA-10
L-03 IO-13 H-01 ACDA-07 CU-02 /087 W
----------116484 281759Z /44
R 281335Z JUL 77
FM AMEMBASSY SOFIA
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 3310
INFO AMEMBASSY BELGRADE
AMEMBASSY BERLIN
AMEMBASSY BUCHAREST
AMEMBASSY BUDAPEST
AMEMBASSY MOSCOW
AMEMBASSY PRAGUE
AMEMBASSY WARSAW

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 1 OF 2 SOFIA 1630

BELGRADE ALSO FOR CSCE DEL

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PDIP, SHUM, CVIS, CSCE, EAGR, SCUL, BU, UNGA, RQ
SUBJECT: EXIT INTERVIEW WITH THE FOREIGN MINISTER

REF: A) STATE 167342; B) STATE 153477; C) SOFIA 1246; D) SOFIA 1580;
E) STATE 175102; E) STATE 153477; F) SOFIA 1455

1. IN ACCORDANCE WITH INSTRUCTIONS, I USED FAREWELL PROTOCOL CALL ON FOREIGN MINISTER MLADENOV JULY 27 FOR REVIEW OF SOME PENDING BILATERAL MATTERS AND ESPECIALLY OF CSCE IMPLEMENTATION. AMBASSADOR GOTSEV, CHIEF OF FOURTH DEPARTMENT, ATTENDED. IN VIEW OF NATURE OF THE OCCASION, MLADENOV WAS EXTREMELY AFFABLE AND (WITH EXCEPTION OF COMPLAINT ABOUT MFN "DISCRIMINATION") GAVE POSITIVE OR SOFT RESPONSES TO ALL POINTS WHICH REQUIRED RESPONSES. HE DID NOT, FOR INSTANCE, IN CONNECTION WITH CSCE BASKET III DISCUSSION, REFER TO RFE.
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PAGE 02 SOFIA 01630 01 OF 02 281541Z

2. IN DISCUSSING BILATERAL RELATIONS I BEGAN WITH POSITIVE COMMENTS ON FAMILY UNIFICATION AUTHORIZED REF A, REMARKING I WOULD RETURN TO THAT SUBJECT IN CONNECTION WITH CSCE. I NOTED RECENT POSITIVE DEVELOPMENTS SUCH AS ZHIVKOVA VISIT, OPENING OF THRACIAN EXHIBIT IN NEW YORK, AND PROSPECTS FOR AGRICULTURAL COOPERATION EXEMPLIFIED

Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 22 May 2009

Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 22 May 2009

BY SHOPOV VISIT. THEN I REFERRED POINTEDLY TO PUERTO
RICO ISSUE (REF B AND F), NOTING THAT WITHIN ITS POSSI-
BILITIES BULGARIA HAD TRIED TO BE HELPFUL LAST YEAR ON
A SUBJECT WE REGARD AS INTERNAL US MATTER, AND THEREFORE
ONE WHICH COULD HAVE DISTURBING EFFECT ON OUR RELATIONS.
I ALSO REFERRED IN POSITIVE TERMS TO BULGARIAN WILLINGNESS
TO ENTER INTO EARLY NEGOTIATIONS WITH BONDHOLDERS PRO-
TECTIVE COUNCIL.

3. NEXT I TOOK OCCASION TO FOLLOW UP ON THE DEMARCHE WITH
VICE MINISTER TSVETKOV (REF C) ON SUBJECT OF AUTHENTICATION
OF DOCUMENTS, EXPLAINING (WHEN MLADENOV SAID HE "HAD NOT
SEEN MY NOTE") THAT WE HAD NOT YET MADE ANY FORMAL REPRE-
SENTATIONS BECAUSE WE SIMPLY COULD NOT BELIEVE THAT BUL-
GARIA WOULD PLACE ITSELF DELIBERATELY IN VIOLATION OF OUR
CONSULAR AGREEMENT. I HAD TO BRING THIS MATTER TO
MLADENOV'S ATTENTION BECAUSE MY FRIENDLY DEMARCHE TO
TSVETKOV JUNE 9 HAD BEEN WITHOUT EFFECT AND RECENTLY SOME
AFFIDAVIT AUTHENTICATIONS BY OUR CONSUL HAD AGAIN BEEN
REFUSED. IT WOULD BE UNFORTUNATE IF MY SUCCESSOR AS ONE
OF HIS FIRST ITEMS OF BUSINESS HAD TO CHARGE BULGARIA
WITH BREACH OF AN INTERNATIONAL AGREEMENT. MLADENOV
UNDERTOOK TO LOOK INTO MATTER IMMEDIATELY, SAYING BUL-
GARIA ALWAYS SCRUPULOUSLY FULFILLS ITS INTERNATIONAL
OBLIGATIONS.

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4. NEXT I PRESENTED VERBATIM THE REMARKS ON CSCE AS PER
PARA 2 REF E, WITH ONE CHANGE: INSTEAD OF SAYING "WE
BELIEVE FURTHER IMPLEMENTATION EFFORTS ON YOUR PART WILL
CONTRIBUTE TOWARDS CREATION OF A MORE POSITIVE ATMOSPHERE
AT THE MAIN MEETING" I SAID "WE BELIEVE FURTHER IMPLEMENTA-
TION ON YOUR PART AND OUR PART", TO REMOVE NOTE OF
SANCTIMONIOUSNESS AND POSSIBLE IMPRESSION OF ARROGANCE
CONTAINED IN THE ORIGINAL PHRASE, AND PARTICULARLY BECAUSE
THERE ARE FURTHER POSITIVE STEPS WHICH WE INTEND TO TAKE
AND TO WHICH I WAS LATER ABLE TO REFER. MLADENOV CLEARLY
TOOK IN THE LINK BTWEEN OUR DESIRE FOR "CONSTRUCTIVE
AND NON-POLEMICAL" MEETING AND NEED FOR MORE BULGARIAN
EFFORTS AT IMPLEMENTATION.

5. GOING INTO SPECIFICS I SAID ON DIVIDED FAMILIES THAT
WHILE GREAT STRIDES HAD BEEN MADE, THERE REMAIN SOME CASES
OF URGENT HUMANITARIAN CONCERN (REF D) WHERE DELAY OR
INACTION MUST BE DUE TO MISUNDERSTANDINGS OR ADMINISTRATIVE
MIX-UPS. I THEN HANDED MLADENOV TWO LISTS, ONE CONTAIN-
ING SEVEN "APPROVED" CASES FROM THE 1975 LIST WHICH FOR
VARIOUS REASONS ARE STYMIED, THE OTHER CONTAINING FOURTEEN
NEW CASES. I SINGLED OUT ONE CASE FROM EACH LIST TO

Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 22 May 2009

Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 22 May 2009

ILLUSTRATE THE VARIED NATURE OF DIFFICULTIES. MLADENOV SAID CATEGORICALLY THAT ANY DIFFICULTIES MUST BE ADMINISTRATIVE SINCE THE POLITICAL DECISION HAD BEEN TAKEN TO LET SUCH PEOPLE GO.

6. IN THIS CONNECTION, MLADENOV MADE A RATHER REVEALING REMARK ABOUT THE MAREV CASE WHICH, HE SAID, HAD REQUIRED

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PAGE 01 SOFIA 01630 02 OF 02 281553Z
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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 2 OF 2 SOFIA 1630

AN EXTRAORDINARY EFFORT BECAUSE OF "EXISTING LAWS AND REGULATIONS". HE HAD HAD TO HAVE PERSONAL DISCUSSIONS WITH THE MINISTER OF JUSTICE AND THE "ATTORNEY GENERAL" AND SINCE THE LAWS DID NOT ALLOW THE CASE TO BE RESOLVED EXPEDITIOUSLY, "WE HAD TO MAKE SOME ALTERATIONS" IN ORDER THAT SUCH "PRIVATE CASES" SHOULD NOT IMPAIR RELATIONS. (I READ THIS TO MEAN THAT WITH MLADENOV'S HELP THE PARTY OVERRODE THE MINISTRIES OF INTERIOR AND JUSTICE.)

7. NEXT I REFERRED TO WHAT MORE WE MIGHT DO IN THE FIELD OF VISITS, IN ACCORDANCE WITH PARA 3 (A) REF E, FOLLOWED BY REMARKS ABOUT BASKET II AS PER REF D, AND REMARKS ABOUT DEFICIENCIES IN BASKET III IMPLEMENTATION, NOTABLY WITH REGARD TO PUBLICATIONS (DESPITE THE COSMETIC CHANGES MADE BY THE BULGARIANS), ALSO AS PER REF D. FINALLY I SAID THAT WITH RESPECT TO FACILITATION OF TRAVEL WE ARE

Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 22 May 2009

Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 22 May 2009

CURRENTLY CAREFULLY CONSIDERING STEPS WE MIGHT TAKE TO
RECIPROCALLY FACILITATE BOTH PRIVATE AND OFFICIAL TRAVEL,
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PAGE 02 SOFIA 01630 02 OF 02 281553Z

AS PER PARA 3 (B) REF E.

8. THE POSITIVE REMARKS THAT MLADENOV MADE IN REPLY
WERE OF THE KIND SUITABLE TO THE OCCASION OF LEAVE-TAKING.
HE THOUGH IT WAS FAIR TO SAY THAT "NEVER, SINCE WORLD
WAR II" HAVE RELATIONS BETWEEN BULGARIA AND THE US BEEN
BETTER. (COMMENT: THIS IS OF COURSE NOT SAYING MUCH
SINCE FOR TEN YEARS THEY WERE WORSE THAN WITH ANY EE
COUNTRY OTHER THAN ALBANIA, AND THE BULGARIANS BEGAN MOVING
TOWARD NORMALIZATION ONLY ABOUT FOUR YEARS AGO, PROBABLY
AT THE PRODDING OF THE RUSSIANS.)

9. ON CSCE, MLADENOV SAID HE WELCOMED OUR STATEMENT
ABOUT THE UTILITY OF BILATERAL CONSULTATIONS AND OF OUR
GENERAL ATTITUDE TOWARD THE MAIN BELGRADE MEETING. IN
USUAL MANNER HE STRESSED BASKET I, ADMITTED SHORTCOMINGS
IN BASKET II ("NOT EVERYTHING CAN BE RECTIFIED IMMEDIATE-
LY") BUT COUNTER-CHARGED WITH RESPECT TO MFN; AND WITH
RESPECT TO BASKET III SAID: "WE ARE MAKING PROGRESS ON
DIVIDED FAMILIES, BUT DO NOT THINK THEY ARE THE MAIN CON-
TENT OF BASKET III." HE SAID BULGARIA IS NOT UNCONCERNED
ABOUT BASKET III, AND WHAT I HAD SAID UNDER INSTRUCTIONS
WOULD BE GIVEN FULL CONSIDERATION.

10 THEN HE SAID SOMETHING OF A MORE GENERAL NATURE.
HE REMINDED ME THAT IN RECENTLY EXPRESSING THANKS (AT
RUSE) FOR HOSPITALITY SHOWN TO HIS DAUGHTER, ZHIVKOV HAD
TALKED TO ME NOT AS PRESIDENT BUT "AS A FATHER". IF
EXISTING "DISCRIMINATIONS" COULD BE REMOVED (MFN), HE
FORESAW A MUCH HIGHER LEVEL OF INTERCHANGES OF ALL
SORTS, NOT ONLY IN BUSINESS; AND HE FELT THAT CONTACTS
DURING THE LAST THREE YEARS HAD SERVED TO REMOVE MANY
MISUNDERSTANDINGS AND DEMONSTRATED THAT GOOD THINGS CAN
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PAGE 03 SOFIA 01630 02 OF 02 281553Z

COME FROM HIGH BULGARIAN AND AMERICAN OFFICIALS MEETING
AND TALKING TOGETHER.

11. I INTERPRET THIS LAST REMARK TO MEAN THAT THE BUL-
GARIANS, WHILE NOT WISHING TO BE TOO EXPLICIT FOR FEAR OF
A REBUFF, ARE LOOKING FOR SOME SORT OF HIGH-LEVEL CONTACT
BETWEEN ZHIVKOV AND THE PRESIDENT OR BETWEEN SECRETARY

Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 22 May 2009

Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 22 May 2009

VANCE AND ZHIVKOV. ZHIVKOV HAS SEVERAL TIMES REFERRED FAVORABLY TO HIS "MEETINGS WITH PRESIDENT FORD" AT HELSINKI (WHERE THERE WAS ONLY THE MOST PERFUNCTORY CONTACT), AND THERE IS NO QUESTION IN MY MIND THAT HE AND MLADENOV ARE EAGER FOR THE KIND OF LEGITIMATION THAT SUCH A REAL MEETING WOULD INVOLVE. AT THE SAME TIME, THEY ALSO HAVE IN MIND THE OCCASIONS, WHICH STILL RANKLE, WHEN PRESIDENT FORD AND HIS SECRETARY OF STATE VISITED BELGRADE AND BUCHAREST, PRACTICALLY OVERFLYING BULGARIA, WITHOUT STOPPING HERE.

12. THIS IS MY READING OF THE BULGARIAN ATTITUDE. AS FOR OUR OWN INTEREST, THERE ARE TWO ASPECTS: ONE IS WHAT WE MIGHT EXPECT TO GET OUT OF A HIGH-LEVEL VISIT HERE. CERTAINLY WE CANNOT EXPECT ANY SUBSTANTIAL CHANGE IN BULGARIA'S OVERALL ORIENTATION. THE OTHER ASPECT IS MORE COMPLICATED. IT IS NOT THAT THE BULGARIANS HAVE ANYTHING URGENT TO TALK WITH US ABOUT AT A HIGH LEVEL, BUT THEY KNOW THAT THEIR COUNTRY IS THE ONLY ONE IN EUROPE WITH WHICH WE MAINTAIN DIPLOMATIC RELATIONS THAT HAS NOT BEEN VISITED BY AN AMERICAN PRESIDENT, VICE PRESIDENT OR SECRETARY OF STATE. SO THE SECOND ASPECT INVOLVES, IN THEIR VIEW, THE REMOVAL OF WHAT THEY SEE AS A "DISCRIMINATION".

13. I THINK IT WOULD BE INAPPROPRIATE FOR ME TO MAKE A RECOMMENDATION ON THIS MATTER SO SHORTLY BEFORE MY DEPARTURE FROM SOFIA. ONE THING, HOWEVER, I CAN RECOMMEND. FOREIGN MINISTER MLADENOV WILL BE AT THE UNGA STARTING
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PAGE 04 SOFIA 01630 02 OF 02 281553Z

SEPTEMBER 25. I BELIEVE IT WOULD BE HELPFUL IN GETTING MY SUCCESSOR OFF TO A GOOD START HERE IF SECRETARY VANCE COULD RESERVE A QUARTER HOUR FOR A BILATERAL WITH MLADENOV IN NEW YORK.
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Message Attributes

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Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
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Disposition Date: 22 May 2009
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
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Disposition Remarks:
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Review Release Date: n/a
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Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
SAS ID: 1958372
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: EXIT INTERVIEW WITH THE FOREIGN MINISTER
TAGS: PDIP, SHUM, CVIS, EAGR, SCUL, BU, RQ, CSCE, UNGA, (MLADENOV, PETUR)
To: STATE
Type: TE
vdkvgwkey: odbc://SAS/SAS.dbo.SAS_Docs/74cab370-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
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